



Adding to Your Faith ^{part 4}

The Art of Controlling Yourself

1:3 His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. 4 Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires. 5 For this very reason, ***make every effort to add to your faith*** goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; 6 and to knowledge, ***self-control***; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; 7 and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love. 8 For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 But if anyone does not have them, he is nearsighted and blind, and has forgotten that he has been cleansed from his past sins. 10 Therefore, my brothers, be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things, you will never fall, 11 and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. (NIV)

1. Know _____

	How You are Wired	How Your Body is Wired	How You Live
Your Life Before Christ			
Your Life as a Christian			
Your Life in the New Jerusalem			

2. Cater to Your _____

3. Remind Your _____

Application Questions

These questions are provided for your further study and application of today's message. It is recommended that you take time this week to write out your response to each of these questions. This will help to drive home the point of today's message and will help you to apply the principles to your life situation.

1. What happens when you forget that the Bible promises that the Christian life will be a battle (the “close to home” battle described in Galatians 5:17)?
2. Talk of “self-denial” in the Christian life is certainly biblical but often it is misunderstood. Read Second Corinthians 5:17 and notice that there the Christian is described as someone who *becomes* someone new! Now read the Old Testament promise of God’s transforming work in a person’s life from Ezekiel 36:25-27. Notice that not only does God give us his Spirit, he also rewires who we are at the core. Talk of self-denial must be understood as the denial of the desires of our flesh and not our core desires as a new creation in Christ. How does this perspective change your view of “denying yourself”?

How does this perspective effect your battle with temptation? Consider a temptation you have struggled with and how you can be roped into a “martyr complex”. How is that used by the enemy to make things worse?

3. Historically Christians have from time to time gone beyond the boundaries of Scripture and viewed their bodies and humanness as beyond any chance of being used for what is righteous. This has led to movements of extreme *asceticism* and *monasticism* (where Christians have isolated themselves and tortured their own bodies with a hatred toward them). Read Romans 6:13. How does this verse give us hope that helps us avoid an attitude of “worthlessness” regarding our bodies?

On the other hand, today’s Christian culture seems to have swung the pendulum to the other extreme giving little thought to the dangers inherent in our flesh. What is so hazardous about this trend?

4. How has this presentation of the biblical relationship and contrast between “you” and “your flesh” helped to fuel your desire to be with Christ in our ultimate physical home – the New Jerusalem?
5. What have been some of the more difficult areas of your flesh to control and what about this message is most helpful and promising as it relates to getting it under control?